

PHIP WFD Committee  
**Public Health Officials (PHO) Orientation**  
[www.doh.wa.gov/pho](http://www.doh.wa.gov/pho)

**Update Project**  
May 2004

The purpose of this project is to update the references and resources in the Washington State Public Health Officials Orientation Information website (<http://devwww/pho/default.htm>), add resources where gaps are identified, and make recommendations for linking or integrating content where appropriate.

Orientation categories included in this project are:

- Local Public Health Officers
- Local Public Health Nursing Directors
- Local Public Health Administrators
- Local Environmental Health Directors
- Local Community Assessment Coordinators

An additional component of this project is to evaluate several other existing orientation products or activities and make recommendations regarding possible linkages to the orientations for the above workforce categories. The objective is a more unified, integrated approach to the various orientations. The following will be included:

- The orientation to DOH for LHJ leaders
- The orientation to LHJs for DOH staff (Understanding and Working with Local Health) conducted by DOH, Community and Family Health Division
- The Resource Manual for Public Health Nursing Directors.

**May 2004 Update**

The workgroup, which includes representation from each WSALPHO forum, and assessment coordinators, and DOH has meet several times, by phone, to review materials provided by the contractor. The first step has been to review and where possible, align the competencies or knowledge, skills, and abilities, included in each orientation. This will serve as the foundation for updating, enhancing and integrating where appropriate, each of the orientations. See additional handouts.

**Where did the PHIP Competencies come from?**

Focusing on the PHIP vision for Washington's public health system, achievement of the Standards for Public Health in Washington State, and drawing on the work of many other groups (i.e. Council on Linkages), the PHIP Workforce Development (WFD) Committee developed and published the PHIP Competencies in the 2002 PHIP Report. Like the PHIP vision statement, these are "system" level competencies - competencies, that likely exist to varying degrees among various agencies and communities, but are needed overall, in the system as a whole.

**What are the Administrative Capacities?**

While the Standards for Public Health in Washington State are an overarching performance measurement framework for services, programs, legislation and state and local administrative codes that affect public health, the Administrative Capacities -- those systems and processes that must be in place to achieve the Standards -- are prerequisites for improving performance and meeting expectations. What does it take to manage and govern my agency? How do I acquire and account for the equipment I need to do my work? How do I go about and what is involved in hiring staff? What systems are in place to help me manage my budget? Questions such as these emphasize the need for the Capacities. The four Administrative Capacities areas are: Finances and Management, Human Resources, Leadership and Governance, and Information Systems. Strong systems and processes in these areas support higher Standards performance and create operational efficiencies.

WFD sub-committees are using the administrative capacities as a starting point for framing "agency" level competencies - competencies which need to be present within the agency, not necessarily any one person.

**Where did the individual competencies come from?**

Orientation materials have been developed for new public health officials (PHOs) in the following areas: local HO; local PHND; local public health administrator; local EHD. Each of these orientations includes lists of necessary knowledge, skills and abilities (KSA) and/or competencies that an individual needs for each roles. These represent "individual" competencies - competencies and individual needs. It is interesting how much overlap exists in the current versions. Work is currently underway to update and where there is overlap, to integrate, these orientations. The first draft of the

integrated version of these KSA / competencies is the starting point for framing "individual" competencies for the public health workforce.